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St. Clair County SWCD
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"Be it deep or shallow, red or black, sand or clay, the soil is the link between the rock core of the earth and the living things on its surface. It is the foothold for the plants we grow. Therein lies the main reason for our interest in soils."

Roy W. Simonson

Office Personnel Changes

Many of you are probably not aware of the changes that have been happening in our office the past few months. Mark Brownlee, District Technician and Chris Hoeme, NRCS Soil Conservationist have both resigned this summer. NRCS has filled the Soil Conservationist position. Katrina O'Farrell is now working here in St. Clair County. Cole Long is the new FOSA shared technician and he will be helping us with district technical duties. Please bear with us during this time of transition.

Katrina O'Farrell Introduction

Hello! Effective August 10th I was relocated to St Clair County to fill the open Soil Conservationist Position. I was raised in Northwest Missouri, where my family still owns/operates a small row-crop & cattle operation. I received my degree in Agronomy from SMSU. I began working for NRCS in 2001 & was placed as a full-time employee in Cass County in May of 2003. I moved to rural bates county in 2005 with my husband Sean, to be closer to his family. We have two daughters Alexis (11) & Kaylee (8). I look forward to assisting St Clair County landowners improve their natural resources with any technical assistance & if needed applying for & managing federal cost-share program contracts such as EQIP & CStP. I will also be working with most of the Soil & Water District Programs and workshops. Feel free to contact me if you need any assistance or have any questions regarding your operation & the programs that we have available.

If anyone would like to be added to an email list please email katrina.ofarrell@mo.usda.gov with the subject "add to email list". You will get local updates on program deadlines, classes & workshops.

NRCS News/Federal Programs Info

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Sign-up is always a continuous but the cut-off date for 2016 Funding is **November 20th**

EQIP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers. These contracts provide financial assistance to help plan and implement conservation practices that address natural resource concerns and for opportunities to improve soil, water, plant, animal, air and related resources on agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland. **EQIP Cost share programs have practices for Animal Feeding/Waste, Cropland, Pasture/Hayland, Forestland, Wildlife special initiatives also includes RCPP/Grassland Birds, Organic, High Tunnel & On-Farm Energy.**

Conservation Stewardship (CStP) 2016 cut-off deadline **TBA.**

CSP participants will receive an annual land use payment for operation-level environmental benefits they produce. Under CSP, participants are paid for conservation performance: the higher the operational performance, the higher their payment.

Len Gilmore - Quail Forever Grazing Lands Biologist

We have another addition to our office. Len Gilmore has retired from MDC and is now working for Quail Forever as a grazing lands biologist. Len will be working with landowners in the west-central counties of Missouri to establish grazing systems on private lands that are conducive for both livestock and wildlife. He will be helping landowners meet their land use objectives while providing additional habitat for quail and other wildlife. He has been working with many landowners in St. Clair and adjoining counties during his career with MDC so he is not NEW to us. Funding for his position is made possible by Quail Forever and Pheasant Forever chapters, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Please call or stop by the office and get acquainted with Len.

What is lime all about, and why do my Pastures Need It?

This article will attempt to answer some common questions about pH, lime, and ENM. Although people throw these terms around quite frequently when it comes to soil testing and pasture management, few can seem to give a good definition of it or why you should lime your pastures. Let's break these terms down and see where they all fit in.

First of all, what is soil pH? To the scientist, pH measures hydrogen ion activity and is expressed in logarithmic terms. What this means to the average person is that each unit change in soil pH stands for a tenfold change in the amount of acidity or basicity. For example, soil with a pH of 5.0 has ten times as much acidity as one with a pH of 6.0. This means lime need increases quickly as pH drops. Most of our soils in this part of Missouri tend to be more acid (pH of 5.0 and below), which restricts plant uptake of nutrients. Plants in the clover family are more productive with a soil pH of 6.0 to 7.0.

We would all like our pasture grasses and clovers to do well, so what about liming to raise my pH? Lime is a naturally occurring substance, made up largely of calcium carbonate (CaCO_3). Lime is manufactured by crushing limestone into fine particles or powder. Is all lime sold for agricultural purposes the same? Actually, it is not. The effectiveness depends on two factors, calcium carbonate equivalent (CCE) and particle size. Using these a rating system has been set up to gauge the ability of the product neutralize acidity. This system is known as Effective Neutralizing Material or ENM. It is rated per ton of agricultural lime. All limestone sold in Missouri must have an ENM rating. Aha! Now we are starting to put it all together.

A common ENM in this part of the world might be anywhere from 400 on up to about 650. If you have a current soil test and it recommends that you put on 1300 pounds of ENM per acre, how do you calculate how many tons of lime you need to apply per acre? Simply divide the amount of ENM by the guarantee of the limestone to find out. In this case, if the ENM is 1300 and the guarantee is 650, you would need to apply 2 tons of lime per acre. In closing, we finally tied this all together and can see that yes, lime matters "it's a good thing", and it is not all that mysterious!



Boomless Sprayer Now Available For Rental

The district has purchased a Schaben 300 gallon boomless sprayer that is available to landowners needing to spray for invasive or noxious weeds and sprouts. As with our no till drills, a rental agreement must be reviewed and signed before taking the sprayer. The landowner is required to purchase a clean out product that will be used after each rental to remove the chemicals used. The fee is \$50.00 per day. For more information, call the office.

The SWCD still has 2 Great Plains 10 ft. No-till drills available for rent. Both drills are capable of planting most seeds, and one of the drill's is also capable of warm season grass seeding's. The rental fee for both drills is \$7.00 an acre for use in St. Clair county. The drills can be used by landowners in adjoining counties for \$8.50 an acre, only if they are not being used by our St. Clair county landowner's and are sitting idle. We ask that the drills be used only on fields that are capable of being mowed for hay or crop ground, as rocky ground and stobs will damage the drills beyond normal wear and tear and the user will be expected to pay for the damages.



If you are interested in any of our cost-share practices, give us a call and we will do our best to help you implement them. We are short handed for technical practices and we are getting some help from Kurtis Greenlee, the district technician in Cedar county, he will be working with some of you from time to time.

Visit Us On The Web

To visit our SWCD website

<http://www.swcd.mo.gov/stclair/index.html>

You Might Also Find These Websites Useful:

DNR Soil & Water Conservation Program: <http://www.dnr.mo.gov/env/swcp/>
This website has a lot of information about the Soil and Water Program in general and also cost-share practice brochures, information about the soils and parks tax, Soil and Water Commission meetings etc.

NRCS: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/mo/home/>



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